

GOV. BILL # 979 - AN ACT PROMOTING ENERGY AFFORDABILITY, ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND GREEN CITIES.

Nancy Bowden, Bloomfield CT – SUPPORT

DATE: February 26, 2023

TO: Members of the Environment Committee

I am writing in support of SB-979. Robust efforts to increase the energy efficiency of all buildings, including privately owned residential and rental properties, is an essential component of climate change mitigation. More importantly, this bill as written can have tremendous benefits for low wealth communities which, as we all know by now, have long suffered the worst of climate change impacts.

I have the following specific comments:

1. Section 1(a) – replace “may” with “shall” as it pertains to seeking alternative energy source bids. This would not obligate selection of an alternative but it does require that the State acquire information about the alternatives that are not currently in play due to the current complex and mostly opaque negotiations that do not involve State participation.
2. Section 2 – for clarity, can a due date related to the DEEP commissioner’s development of the Home Energy Label be specified? It appears to be January 1, 2024 or possibly March 31, 2024 ... or even later.
3. Sections 5 and 6 – while I am not a plumber or electrician, I fully support anything we can do to provide professional training to support energy efficiency as well as to provide a better pathway to a just transition for workers in all trades that will be impacted by successful efforts to mitigate greenhouse gases.
4. Section 7 – Yes, Yes, Yes to tree canopy cover in urban areas, assuming of course that urban foresters adhere to the principles of “right tree, right place”. I also hope that residents will be provided with information about urban heat islands and the accompanying health threats, along with education about the value of trees in our environment. Even in the suburbs, far too many people support the chopping down of mature trees, often just for the reason of fewer leaves to rake! This is totally short-sighted and we have a long way to go to replace urban canopy, so I urge a high-profile public campaign to support this initiative.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Nancy Bowden, Treasurer, 350CT

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